DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 407 123 PS 025 351

AUTHOR Samaras, Anastasia P.; Wilson, Josephine C.
TITLE Making the Road by Walking It: Launching an Inner-City Family-School Involvement Program Using Technology.
PUB DATE Apr 97
NOTE 22p.; Paper presented at the Annual International Study Conference of the Association for Childhood Education International (Portland, OR, April 9-12, 1997).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *After School Programs; Blacks; College School Cooperation; *Computer Uses in Education; Educational Technology; Elementary Education; *Family School Relationship; Family (Sociological Unit); Higher Education; Inner City; *Parent Attitudes; Parent Participation; Partnerships in Education; Program Descriptions; *Story Telling; *Urban Education
IDENTIFIERS African Americans

ABSTRACT

This project, "First Teachers," studied urban African-American families' perceptions of an after school involvement program which incorporates family storytelling and writing using computers. The project also examined the development and maintenance of university partnerships with inner-city school families, families' interaction and teaching strategies using computers, and the training of preservice and inservice teachers in a sociocultural-based family-school involvement model. Participating were two elementary schools in partnership arrangements with a university education department. One school is public and the other parochial with 90 to 100 percent of the students being African-American. Students in kindergarten through third grade and their families were invited to participate in the 1-hour, 1 day-a-week, after school program. The program is being implemented in 1996-97 through workshops conducted with school faculty and university education students. Children and families explore computers and co-author family stories and create family albums through telling, writing, and illustrating stories on computers. Data on family perceptions were collected through audiotaped semi-structured interviews. Preliminary findings indicated that: (1) there is a large variation in family-child interaction and teaching styles that support children's learning and families' knowledge about children's learning; (2) families are able to observe other families who care deeply about their children's education in a housing project community; and (3) families note a sense of reciprocal helping interactions. (Contains 41 references.) (KDFB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 407 123

Making the road by walking it: Launching an inner-city family-school involvement program using technology

Anastasia P. Samaras, Ph.D.
Director of Teacher Education & Assistant Professor

and

Josephine C. Wilson, Ph.D.
Coordinator of Field Experiences

Co-Directors, *First Teachers*
The Catholic University of America
Department of Education
208 O'Boyle Hall
Washington, DC 20064

202-319-5800
fax: 202-319-5815
e-mail: samaras@cua.edu
wilsonj@cua.edu

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Anastasia P. Samaras
Josephine C. Wilson
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Paper Presentation
The Association for Childhood Education International
Annual International Study Conference
Portland, Oregon
April 9 - 12, 1997

PS 025351

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MAKING THE ROAD BY WALKING IT: LAUNCHING AN INNER-CITY FAMILY-SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM USING TECHNOLOGY

Anastasia P. Samaras and Josephine C. Wilson
Co-Directors of *First Teachers*
Department of Education
The Catholic University of America[1]
Washington, DC

Abstract

This research project, *First Teachers*, is an investigation of urban African-American families' [2] perceptions of an after school involvement program which incorporates family storytelling and writing using computers. The program utilizes grass roots recruitment measures for encouraging family involvement in schools and a sociocultural-based implementation model to facilitate families' documentation of family stories using technology. The program model has both theoretical and practical application to families, communities, educators and schools.

The overall *research goal* in this program was to examine the impact of urban African-American families' involvement in their children's education in a program that utilized computer-documented narratives. Specifically, objectives of this research project were to explore African-Americans' families perceptions and views of: 1) the impact of their involvement on their children's academic performance, 2) the value of technology in their children's learning, and 3) the role of story and shared activity in rooting children's family identities and values. This project also examined such issues as: developing and maintaining university partnership programs with inner-city school families, investigating families' interaction and teaching strategies using computers, and training preservice and inservice teachers in a sociocultural-based family-school involvement model.

The overall *program goal* was to empower families to know about and be involved in their children's learning with computers. The four specific program goals of the project were: 1) to promote families' advocacy for their children's learning and their own through dialogue, writing,

reading, and technology, 2) to facilitate the documentation of families' stories, culture, and interests, 3) to provide opportunities for children to show their families what they were doing in school with computers, and 4) to connect preservice and inservice teachers with families enabling them to hear the family's voice about the environmental forces that have shaped families' lives, school experiences, and dreams for their children's education.

A Call to Action

Historically, the agenda for education in America has been responsive to national needs with tremendous political, social and economic demands placed on schools. In both Republican and Democratic circles, today's political forum revolves largely around three key concerns: 1) the breakdown of the American family, 2) the failure of public education, and 3) welfare reform. Politicians proselytize that one of the most crucial components towards the needed reform is parental involvement in children's education (Riley, 1995; Rodham Clinton, 1996).

In 1989, President Bush and a group of governors met to set an agenda for school reform by the year 2000. Initially, the plan included six major goals which did not include parent involvement. Family and community involvement were later incorporated as the essential link in the educational reform process with a call for strong partnerships between schools and families (National Education Goals Panel, 1995). [3] The Goals 2000: Educate America Act (U.S. Department of Education,1994b) demands family involvement with local schools and local educational agencies establishing programs for increasing partnerships that respond to the varying needs of parents and the home, including parents of children who are disadvantaged or bilingual, or parents of children with disabilities.

President Clinton has announced his *Call to Action for American Education* (1997) that challenges parents to get involved early in their children's learning and for schools to create neighborhood learning communities through organized before and after-school activities. During his presidential campaign, Clinton announced his plan of putting a computer in every classroom. Families need to be part of that plan. Computers promote academic learning and connect families and schools (U.S. Department of Education, 1994a). The National "Back to School" campaign (U.S. Department of Education, 1995) encourages schools to make the use of technology and computers as a learning priority in schools and home in the family involvement partnership. Resources and funding for innovative methods with technology are problems for all schools, but especially for schools with high levels of poverty.

The program, *First Teachers*, builds upon and extends existing partnerships between the Catholic University of America and urban schools by incorporating connections with families and schools. A crucial component of *First Teachers* is for families and children to work together sharing family histories through storytelling and literacy activities and to prepare for their employment futures through the use of technology. Families also have opportunities to dialogue with their children's teachers and preservice teachers from The Catholic University of America. Families can become more familiar with class assignments, increase their own computer skills and spend time with their children. Children show and tell about their computer skills and teach their families about the technology, building children's sense of efficacy and self-confidence.

Relevant Scholarly Literature

There is a growing body of research that supports the importance of the involvement of parents in their children's education (National Education Goals Report, 1996; Swap, 1992; U. S. Department of Education, 1994a). We know that families can play a key role in children's school achievement and success (Bronfenbrenner, 1974; Hess & Holloway, 1984; Scott-Jones, 1984) and that parent involvement is linked to positive effects on students' learning (Epstein & Dauber, 1991; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991).

When parents have visibility and vitality in a school, teachers and parents come to know about each other's concerns and needs which promote the learning of students (Comer, 1988).

Early school effective researchers, such as Ron Edmonds and Larry Lezotte, did not include parental involvement as essential to school or child success partially because it was viewed as a fringe benefit; a variable that was difficult to manipulate (Bullard & Taylor, 1993). Present effective schools researchers have found that strong community support and involved parents are critical to schools (U.S. Department of Education, 1994a; 1995). Students bring their home life experiences and values to the classroom and knowledge of these experiences are valuable to teachers' planning and students' learning (Office of Educational Research and Improvement,

1996). Reform efforts call for the personal responsibility and obligations of parents as the persons primarily responsible for ensuring their children are adequately prepared to compete in the American economy of the 21st century (Loury, 1995). Parents are children's first teachers. Parental responsibility does not end when children begin school. Although there is much publicity and research support about the need for parental involvement, schools still struggle in building partnerships with parents. There lies the paradox that voluminous amounts of research have not significantly changed practice.

There are several barriers to parental involvement, particularly for single parents with financial, educational, and resource limitations. Family background and social class may affect families interactions with schools (Lareau, 1989). Researchers have noted such factors as: narrow conceptualization and inappropriate attitudes by teachers and administrators about parental involvement, lack of teacher preparation, parental occupational limitations, and cultural characteristics (Yap & Enoki, 1995). The social context of families' past social interactions with society and school, influences how and what families know about being involved with their children's education (Ogbu, 1985).

Families need assistance in knowing how they can take part in their children's learning. Mrs. Clinton (1996) notes that it is essential for the whole society to care about the well-being of families so children can thrive. Families need guidance in how to gain social and cultural capital so that they can become self-regulated decision makers and advocates for their children's learning. Their interests and talents remain untapped in multigenerational whirlpools of poverty and in a cycle of not knowing how to enter in their children's learning. This is complicated by their own unmet safety and physical needs (Maslow, 1954). All families however, even from the poorest communities, have assets despite their economic and social deficits. One of the greatest and accessible assets that all families have are the stories of their past and their cultures. The transmission of cultural values through the oral tradition has been an essential component of African-American families' lives and has served to build a sense of continuity, belonging,

ethnicity, confirmation of self-worth, and documentation of their faith and resiliency (Hale, 1991).

Fueling the cycle of the miseducation about family involvement are teacher preparation programs that do little to broaden preservice teachers' knowledge and interaction skills with families from inner-city, low-income schools. This encourages the new cadre of teachers to exit universities with more traditional conceptions of parent involvement and little knowledge of communities unlike their own (de Acosta, 1996; Turney, Eltis, Towler, & Wright, 1985). Individual attitudes, distrust, and misconceptions of families are often products of homes and are generated in historical relationships among cultures, races, class, and genders which can be problematic for preservice teachers from any race (Harris, 1997; Taylor & Wilson, 1997). Teachers are exasperated with parents' low attendance at conferences and lack of support in their children's education. Some teachers in our research commented: "There are so many places parents could take their children to learn about things in D.C. and they're free". "I get angry when parents are willing to buy their kindergarten child a graduation robe and new outfit, and when I ask them for money for a field trip they won't send it in". We have come to believe that incorporating a field-based family-school involvement program with teacher education students is a formidable, but necessary challenge in teacher preparation (Samaras & Wilson, 1997).

Teacher education programs, as well as school systems that provide inservice education, often disseminate lists of strategies or recipe type ideas for parent involvement which most often include activities that are tangentially related to children's school learning, e.g. assisting with classroom tasks, home-based activities, membership in PTA, etc. Winters (1990), calls this type of parent involvement as "participation" but not "involvement". It does not empower parents themselves. Such participation is not grounded in a theory of interaction between families and children and does not acknowledge the essence of *situated cognition* or context-based learning. Few programs are responsive to the atypical family styles of today and do not include extended family members that may be actually caring for the child such as grandmother, aunt, older sister, brother, or neighbor.

Theoretical perspectives

Theoretical perspectives from Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory of teaching and learning served as the major research base for this research. According to Vygotsky, the development of one's knowledge is not a singular, self-constructive process and is one that is often developed by parents, peers, and teachers. Shared activity, or culturally mediated instruction, is the means that facilitate a child's internalization of mental processes and the tools of culture such as language, narrative and the use of technology (Bodrova & Leong, 1996; Samaras, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). Particularly for young children, writing is a complex cultural activity that can extend functions already served by speech and drawing (McLane,1990). Families can serve to support, motivate and sustain children's ideas through writing. Storytelling is a powerful tool to move children's thinking to higher levels while binding people together in relationship and a sense of community (Elliot, 1997; Kalfus & Van Der Schyff, 1996; McNamee, 1990).

The research also draws from the Deweyian (1926) experiential, interest-driven approach, Bruner's (1990) discussion on the dual nature of cultural psychology with stories as viable instruments for social negotiation, and Ogbu's (1978) work on the self-esteem of minority peoples.

Method

Setting/Subjects

The settings for the research were two elementary schools which are in partnership arrangements with the university education department in which both researchers are employed (i.e. the university sends education students to the schools to tutor or student teach and education professors assist with curriculum revision utilizing technology). This project utilized the schools' existing technical resources. Although there are many current curriculum revisions ongoing at both schools, it is our belief that authentic and longitudinal change can take place only if families are a part of the reform process.

The first cohort school, Cityview Elementary School (pseudonym) is a public elementary school of 380 African-American children in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. It is surrounded by and draws almost all of its population from two public housing complexes. Ninety-four percent of the children qualify for free or reduced lunch. It has a highly transient population and high rate of absenteeism. Unfortunately, it faces the same challenges of many urban public schools. It is a professional development school with the university therefore faculty and education students are known by sight by its faculty and pupils. The school is home to a recently awarded Apple Partnership grant which provided state-of-the-art technological equipment in four, early childhood classrooms, kindergarten through third grade.

Students in grades kindergarten through third grade and their families were invited to participate in the one hour, one day a week, after school program. Research supports higher levels of family involvement in the younger grades that decreases over the child's schooling (The National Education Goals Report, 1995). Thus, involving families early, when participation is greatest, is essential to building a strong program.

The second cohort school, St. Luke's School, (pseudonym) is a long-standing Catholic school with ties to The Catholic University of America dating back to 1922. The school and its parish are located in an old, established community near the university. It has 250 children in prekindergarten through eighth grade. The racial composition of the school is 91% African-American, 4% Caucasian, 3% Hispanic, and 2% Asian; 56% are non-Catholic, 44% Catholic, 25% parishioners, 58% D.C. residents, 42% Maryland residents. The children at St. Luke's come from variable socioeconomic levels and many come from multi-racial families. Students in grades first through third grade and their families were invited to participate in the program.

Pilot Study

Procedures

The pilot study was conducted February through June, 1996 at Cityview Elementary School.

Phase one involved a parent needs assessment survey distributed through children's classrooms which asked parents if they wanted to come to the school to learn how children were using computers and their availability for participation. *Phase two* included several computer manipulation sessions where parents and children worked together in exploring the capabilities of the computer and how it was being used in the classroom. *Phase three* involved cohorts of families and their children co-authoring family stories generated by families' interests. Families and young children talked about, wrote and children often drew stories of their family creating a family album of their past. Families rotated through fouor different learning centers located throughout a classroom. First they told their stories orally in the *Talking Center*. Second, they wrote their stories on paper in the *Writing Center*. Third, children could draw pictures about their stories in the *Drawing Center*. Fourth, families typed and printed their stories on a computer in the *Computer Center*.

Pilot Implementation Summary

Pilot successfully implemented and involved:

* Purpose setting, program goals, outcomes
* Initial contacts with school principal, teachers, parents
* Family needs assessment survey conducted through classrooms
* Initial Program Promotion
* Implementation of pilot program
* Individual classroom orientation sessions for families
* School meetings with input from families, teachers and the principal
* Copies of family writings sessions collected
* Continued Program Promotion
* Preliminary evaluation of program: dilemmas, challenges and possibilities
* Revisions for fall program planned

* Certificates of participation at Volunteer Awards Assembly

Findings from Pilot Study

* In the pilot, utilizing the four, early childhood computerized classrooms (Kindergarten, first, second, and third grade), 32 family members learned about what their children were doing with computers in school.
* There was a large variability in family-child interaction patterns. Families demonstrated a deep concern in their child's education and modeled sophisticated teaching strategies. Some parents were computer literate.
* One quarter of the top participants were males.
* The largest family participation and interest was in the lower grades, kindergarten and first grade.
* The inclusion of all family members and extended family gave children more opportunities to participate in program.
* The program ran successfully without extrinsic rewards given to families.

Program Implementation: Model One and Model Two

Procedures

1) Program implementation of Model One at Cityview Elementary School was conducted from September through December, 1996. The model was exported to St. Luke's Elementary School (Model Two) which took place from January through April, 1997.

2) The principal investigators, Drs. Samaras and Wilson, provided a workshop and conducted meetings with school faculty and education students to explain the program. Both school faculty and education students shadowed principal investigators and served as implementation assistants. It is planned that with continued training, implementation assistants will advance to implementation coordinators with the support of school faculty.

3) An interview protocol based on the pilot study was developed and designed to query families about their perspectives of the family-school involvement program. The researchers conducted audio-taped semi-structured interviews with families lasting approximately 30 minutes at Cityview Elementary School in November, 1996 and are currently conducting interviews with families at St. Luke's School. This family interview data is the major data source for analysis for the research.
4) Family/child-related data was collected from multiple sources. The multi-data source included: computer-documented family stories collected for a family album, computer-generated quick-take photographs, audio-taped, semi-structured interviews, observations, and field notes. The underlying structure of the family album included stories of: 1) families' experiences, 2) families' education-related life histories and 3) families' expectations and goals for their child's education (adapted from McCaleb,1994). When possible, connections to what children were learning in the classroom were coordinated with classroom teachers and incorporated in the writing projects.
5) Participants were provided with a description of the use of the data and had an opportunity to ask questions about the research. The participants were asked to sign a consent form to participate and be photographed. The form also assured the confidentially of research records and the absence of personal obligations. Names of families and other identifying characteristics of schools have been changed and coded to ensure external anonymity. The researchers are the only persons with access to the identity of the respondents and the data generated. The interview process posed no physical or psychological risks to the respondents and met all university standards of the Committee for the Protection of the Human Subjects.

Data Analysis

The data analysis will be conducted using first level coding and pattern coding which involve memoing and marginal remarks (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). From the audio-taped semi-structured interviews, *perspectives held by families* is the coding family drawn from the multi-data source collection and used to describe the phenomena and events that are depicted in transcribed audio-

taped interviews. Overarching themes or constructs will serve to cluster perceptions across participants, using the *R* analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Inter-rater reliability of theme analysis will be conducted. The data generated from the interviews will be pattern coded with the use of Qualpro, a MS-DOS computer software package developed for the analysis of qualitative data. Matrices will be used to organize data. The findings from the two cohorts schools will later be compared.

Future funding will be sought for further analysis of the family albums, the sponsorship of a computer network between the two cohort schools and a colloquium where families from both schools can come together to share and celebrate their stories with other families, university and school faculty and education students. The model has replication potential for further exportation to other schools.

Preliminary Findings from Model One and Model Two

Preliminary findings from the family interviews conducted at Cityview Elementary and St. Luke's School revealed:

1) There was a large variation in family-child interaction and teaching styles that supported children's learning and families' knowledge about children's learning.

2) As several families and young children worked together in the same setting, they were able to observe other families who cared deeply about their children's education in a housing project community that has the appearance that "no one cares here".

3) Families commented on a sense of reciprocal helping interactions, e.g families and children helping each other, and positive affective outcomes for children and themselves, e.g. feeling good, proud, supportive, successful.

Success Indicators and Our Suggestions

* Begin the program with a meeting with the school principal, requesting the support needed to implement the program.
* Frequent communication with teachers is vital to program's success.
* Solicit teachers continuously for ideas and suggestions.
* Teachers can be active recruiters.
* Recruiting parents one-on-one, i.e. meeting after school, outside the child's classroom, on the playground, or near high activity zones, like in front of the school office or school doors, were very effective recruitment measures.
* The computer manipulation phase helped build rapport and establish trust between families and researchers.
* Establishing trust with families and teachers is a key to program success and continued participation.
* The program must begin slowly and build from a cohort of active participants.
* Family stories and games are opportunities for all families, regardless of educational level, to share their stories, identify, culture, and lineage and to interact in a learning setting. Stories speak of families' struggles, values, and can encourage rather than discourage children to sacrifice, strive and move forward. Family stories speak of care, love, relationships, and belonging.
* When teachers participated, they came to know the families of their students better.
* For younger children, use the child's own classroom not a central computer lab which hinders families' comfort zones, trust, and involvement with their child's teacher.
* A show and tell format between the child and family member, without researcher input, is an effective strategy for initial implementation. Families can watch as children show them what they have learned on the computer. This process diminishes problems in exposing families' low literacy levels. It also keeps researchers at a safe distance for families who

may distrust researchers and their research intentions.

* Children were anxious and pleased to have this extra time to *play* on the computer because computer time is very limited during the school day.
* Children were the most active recruiters and motivated their families to be involved.
* Tuesdays and Thursdays were high participation days. Fridays were not good for families or teachers.
* Once families came to one session, they tended to come again.

Implications to the Field

This study investigated: establishing a sociocultural-based family-school involvement model, broadening family involvement beyond the normative mother-only participant, building communications channels and trust between universities, schools, and families, and providing avenues for preservice and inservice teachers to experience the potential of collaboration with families and the community to promote children's learning.

A likely outcome of our research shall be an identification of what families see as important to a family-school involvement program and the role of technology in such a program. A planned outcome will be for low-income, young children to locate and identify themselves in their own family histories through story. A plausible theoretical contribution will be an analysis of a sociocultural based model of family interaction with inner-city, poor, minority populations and the implications to other school systems. We need to move beyond traditional notions of parent involvement with menial tasks to mediated and meaningful ones.

Another outcome will be to demonstrate that extended families and significant others in the child's life, play an important role in children's academic development. Kinship relationships may serve as primary academic and social scaffolds for African-American children living in urban areas and should be recognized and included in family-school involvement programs. Programmatic efforts that strengthen these relationships could have positive effects relative to children's academic

success, behavior in school, and resilience to problems that plague urban neighborhoods. Family-school programs that connect the family to other families could be instrumental in building a sense of community.

Few teacher education programs offer formal training in collaborating with families (U. S. Department of Education, 1994a). We have attempted to prepare our preservice teachers to work and reflect in schooling situations that may differ substantially from their own schooling experiences, calling into question the moral and ethical perspectives in their role as teacher. The majority of our education students come from Caucasian, middle to upper class backgrounds and attended private schools. This research project will be valuable to other researchers, teacher educators, and school systems involved in preservice and inservice education who strive towards reciprocal enculturation, "a process whereby new cultural patterns are acquired by both systems, family and school, as they develop and mature, and each can be endowed with new energy that changes its configuration". (Winters, 1990, p. 3).

As we strive to educate all children, new ways to convince families to join in community with schools must be supported. Schools *and* universities must support families' efforts in assisting children to succeed in school. Programs that target multigenerational poverty, the rejuvenation of the family unit, and family networks, can only build a better America for everyone. The consequences of disregarding the educational needs of all children may lead to broader societal dilemmas that can cripple a democratic structure, such as the level of the nation's economic competitiveness, increased monies allotted to poverty programs, and an expanding pool of a poorly educated, oppressed families (Bullard & Taylor, 1993; Giroux, 1990). This research project is one small, but extremely significant effort in addressing those concerns.

References

Bodrova, E., & Leong, D. J. (1996). *Tools of the mind: The Vygotskian approach to early childhood education*. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1982). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1974). *Is early intervention effective? A report on longitudinal evaluations of pre-school programs* (Vol. II). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bullard, P., & Taylor, B. O. (1993). *Making school reform happen*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Comer, J. (1988). Educating poor minority children. *Scientific American,* 259(5), 42-48.

de Acosta, M. (1996). A foundational approach to preparing teachers for family and community involvement in children's education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 47* (1), 9-15.

Dewey, J. (1956). *The child and the curriculum and The school and society*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Elliot, I. (1996). We are a family of learners. *Teaching K-8*. September, 54 -58.

Epstein, J., & Dauber, S. (1991). School programs and teacher practices of parent involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools. *The Elementary School Journal, 91,* 270-289.

Giroux, H. (1990). A pedagogy for democracy. *CABE Newsletter, 12,* 16.

Greenwood, G., & Hickman, C. (1991). Research and practice in parent involvement: Implication for teacher education. *The Elementary School Journal, 91,* 279- 288.

Hale, J. (1991). The transmission of cultural values to young African American children. *Young Children, 46* (6), 7-15.

Harris, D. M. (1997). Parents and teachers. *Multicultural Education, 4,* (3), 26 -27.

Hess, R. D., & Holloway, S. D. (1984). Family and school as educational institutions. In R. D. Parke, R. M. Emde, H. P. McAdoo, & G. P. Sackett (Eds.), *Review of Child Development Research* (Vol. 7, pp. 179-222). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kalfus, J., & Van Der Schyff, L. (1996). Storytelling. *Teaching K-8*. September, 72-73.

Lareau, A. (1989). *Home advantage: Social class and parental intervention in elementary education*. Philadelphia, PA: Falmer Press.

Loury, G. C. (August 6, 1995). Getting involved: An appeal for greater community participation in public schools. *The Washington Post*.

Maslow, H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper & Row.

McCaleb, S. P. (1994). *Building communities of learners: A collaboration among teachers, students, families, and community*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

McLane, J. B. (1990). Writing as a social process. In L. C. Moll, (Ed.), *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology*. (pp. 304 - 318). Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

McNamee, G. D. (1990). Learning to read and write in an inner-city setting: A longitudinal study of community change. In L. C. Moll, (Ed.), *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology*. (pp. 287 - 303). Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Miles, M., & Huberman, A. M. (1984). *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

National Education Goals Panel (1995). The National Education Goals Report: Executive Summary: Improving education through family-school community partnerships. Washington, DC.

Office of Educational Research and Improvement (1996). *Condition of education*, National Center for Education Statistics, Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Education.

Ogbu, J. (1985). A cultural ecology of competence among inner-city blacks. In M. Spencer, G. Brookins, & W. Allen (Eds.), *Beginnings: The social and affective development of black children* (pp. 45-66). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Riley, C. (August, 1995). *Community update*. (27). Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Education.

Rodman Clinton, H. (1996). *It takes a village*. NY: Simon & Schuster.

Samaras, A. P. (1991)). Transitions to competence: An investigation of adult mediation in preschoolers' self-regulation with a microcomputer-based problem-solving task. *Early Education and Development, 2* (3), 181-196.

Samaras, A. P. & Wilson, J. C. (1997). *Making the Road by Walking It: Launching an Inner-city School Family-school Involvement Program Using Technology*. Paper presentation at The Annual International Study Conference of the Association for Childhood Education International, Portland, OR.

Scott-Jones, D. (1984). Family influences on cognitive development and school achievement. In. E. W.Gordon (Ed.) *Review of Research in Education, 7*. Itasca, Il: Peacock.

Swap, S. M. (1992). Parent involvement and success for all children: What we know now. In S. L. Christenson & J. C. Conoley (Eds.), *Home-school collaboration: Enhancing children's academic and social competence*, (pp. 53 - 80). Silver Spring, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Taylor, N. E., & Wilson, J. C. (1997). Teaching in culturally diverse contexts: Findings from a reflective teacher education program. Paper presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Turney, C., Eltis, K. J., Towler, J., & Wright, R. (1985). *A new basis for teacher education: The practicum curriculum*. Sydney, Australia: Sydmac Academic Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Original work published in Moscow, 1960).

U. S. Department of Education (1994a). *Strong families, strong schools: Building community partnership for learning.* Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.

U. S. Department of Education (1994b). Goals 2000: Educate America Act. (Report to Accompany H. R. 1804. H. Rep. No. 103-446, 103d Cong., 2nd Sess).

U. S. Department of Education (1995). *America goes back to school: A place for families and the community, A partners' activity guide.* Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Education.

U. S. Department of Education (1997). *A Call to Action for American Education.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Yap, K. O., & Enoki, D. Y. (1995). In search of the elusive magic bullet: Parental involvement and student outcomes. *The School Community Journal, 5* (2) 97 - 106.

Winters, W. G. (1990). *African-American mothers and urban schools: The power of participation.* New York: Lexington Books.

1. We thank The Catholic University of America, the School of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Education and the Laboratory for Student Success, Washington, DC, CRES for support in this research project.

2. We have designed a program for family, and not just parental involvement. Children are often cared for by significant others, including grandparents, cousins, and close friends. By including extended family members, children have alternative and additional participation interactions that include connections in the community. A greater number of participants may thus impact

children's learning.

3. The National Education Goal #8 states: "By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children". (National Education Goals Panel, 1996, p.3)